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No one can doubt that Homer must have drawn on preceding tradition and literature for his knowledge of the age described, but just because we have no independent knowledge of this literature or tradition it is impossible to decide what is due to the source and what is due to Homer. Even when we do have the source it is difficult to judge which is the source and which the imitation; Mülder is certain that the speech of Priam in *Iliad* xxiv is modeled after a poem of Tyrtaeus, while to most scholars the imitation seems just the reverse. Here we do have the original and the copy, yet cannot agree; but when one attempts to reconstruct an assumed original with no clue except that furnished by the copy there is no check on the most rash hypotheses. Where I have the material from which to form a judgment I cannot accept Mülder's theories in regard to original and copy, as in the assumed imitation of Tyrtaeus by Homer and the assumption that the anger of Poseidon in the *Odyssey* is copied from the anger of Achilles in the *Iliad*.

While the arguments in regard to the sources are built upon too small a basis, the book is still one of unusual merit and every page is full of the most original and brilliant observations.

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*Aristotle on the Art of Poetry.* By INGRAM BYWATER. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909. Pp. xlvii + 387. 16s. net.

The peculiar value of the book lies in the wealth of illustration by which Professor Bywater endeavors to make Aristotle explain himself. A very striking use is also made of Isocrates. Add to this the scientific spirit, the fine sobriety, and textual acumen of Professor Bywater, and we have an edition which was much needed and which pretty well exhausts what antiquity can do to explain its own remains. It is a noble edition of the *Poetics* and in its way complete. But whether this famous book can be explained without venturing into a field from which Professor Bywater expressly excludes himself is another question.

It is no doubt true that Aristotle "would be surprised to find how large a meaning we are able to read into some of his more incidental utterances." But if the appeal is to Aristotle *redivivus*, would he not be still more surprised at the enormous energy expended upon determining his *ipsissima verba*? Would he not find the scholarship more congenial which argued with him upon first principles?

Of course what Aristotle really did mean is what we want to know, whether or not we like it or him for saying it, and everything depends upon how the metaphor of *κάθαρσις* originally suggested itself to him. All may agree that his first intention was a criticism of Plato. Does he not indeed consciously take up the mocking challenge which Plato makes to the champions of tragedy? Reducing to its simplest dimensions

Professor Bywater's fine summary and justification of the doctrine of Weil and Bernays, we are to make Aristotle say that tragedy, instead of nourishing certain normal though disturbing human emotions, affords a safe and pleasurable discharge of their overplus. To this pleasant cure, as to drugs in general, we should resort only occasionally. Here lies the healing power of poetry. If not an anodyne or narcotic, it is a cathartic.

But there is after all more assumption in this argument than at first sight appears. Are we to believe that the *why* was not as present to the eager mind of Aristotle as the *how*? *Why* do we take a noble delight in what excites pain in ordinary life? Is it not more than possible that this mysterious power of art was the very thing that suggested the metaphor to our pioneer in the theory of art? In short, are we not justified in assuming that Aristotle is making the first fumbling attempt in history to detach a first principle of art? Professor Bywater is not so happy in his summary of opposing views. They can neither be comprehended under the one head of the lustratory use of *κάθαρσις*, nor are they all allowed for. They do not include, for example, the most interesting argument of Knoke, Milton is hopelessly misplaced, and Browning ignored. But creative instinct counts for something. There is, moreover, a sort of naïve petulance in the way he concludes his defense of the interpretation of Weil and Bernays as "more consonant with fact and experience than the moral or disciplinary purpose which many still profess to regard as the true *raison d'être* of the theatre"—as though this were the only alternative.

One could have wished that Professor Bywater had stopped to consider the possibilities of the suggestion *πράκτικα* for *καθαρτικὰ* in the last sentence of the famous passage of the *Politics*, which he appends to his text. It has a very important bearing. Aristotle shares the belief of all Greece in the importance of *ethical* music, admits the music of *πρᾶξις* into his state as furnishing harmless pleasure to the man in the street or pastime and relaxation for all, and justifies what is evidently the faint dawn of the splendid art of today, as affording not "harmless pleasure," but a high employment of leisure (cf. *Pol.* v. [viii.] 5. 1339a. 25-31).

Now whether we have lost Aristotle's development of *κάθαρσις*, or he has failed, as often, to keep a promise, he has none the less done something in the *Poetics* to explain the *why*, and, as we should anticipate, Professor Bywater is weak at such points. First of all, had Aristotle done nothing more than touch for the first time upon the generalizing power of poetry, it would have been a sufficient achievement. Has this no bearing upon *κάθαρσις*? Professor Bywater, it is true, quotes Diderot (p. 188) on the novelist Richardson with exquisite appositeness, but one regrets, without being able to explain, his Olympian silence as to Butcher's development of this context—surely one of the finest things in modern English scholarship. Again, the significance of *δι' ἀμαρτίαν* is

found to lie in that we are thus enabled to forgive or pity the hero! In the same connection, Twining's interpretation of *φιλάνθρωπον* (1452. b. 38) is dismissed, a consideration which perhaps decided the retention of *στοχάζονται* (1456. a. 21) and certainly accounts for the venturesome note on p. 254. But Aristotle says *καὶ ὁ ἀνδρεὸς μὲν ἄδικος δὲ, ποτὲ καὶ ὁ ἄδικος μὲν ἀνδρεὸς δὲ*. And, finally, there is no note on *τὸν ἐν μεγάλῃ δόξῃ ὄντων καὶ εὐτυχίᾳ . . .* (1453 a. 10-11; though he stops to note the apparent contradiction in *ἡ βελτίονος* 1453 a. 16). But is there no significance in the doctrine that tragedy must be the "fall of something great"?

But when Professor Bywater deals with the text, and in the main body of the commentary, one can feel nothing but admiration for his refined, if hard-headed, sobriety. No one has so well pointed out or so carefully collected the lapses and contradictions in the *Poetics*, or so clearly shown the apparent waning of Aristotle's interest in his subject as the book goes on.

Professor Bywater frankly undertakes at the start to prove that the Arabic version is of little or no value as against the final authority of A<sup>c</sup>. The notes on 1447. a. 17 *τῷ γένει ἔτέρους* and 1448. a. 10-11, *τῷ περὶ τοὺς λόγους* are good examples of the well-known judgment which appears on nearly every page. One observes casually that Vahlen's insertion of *εἰ* before *εὐτυχεῖ* in 1460. b. 36, is silently passed by, and, strangely, the commentary contains no note on the singular passage *εξ οὗ μεταβαίνειν εἰς εὐτυχίαν . . .* (1455. b. 28).

We heartily accept his position that a translation of Aristotle should lean toward paraphrase. If somewhat bold, his version is very sure-footed where others stumble, as e.g. 1455. a. 30-31, *πιθανώτατοι γὰρ ἀπὸ τῆς αὐτῆς φύσεως*, where Butcher goes wrong. But one must object to "as having magnitude" in the definition of a tragedy, where the note also is defective, for the principle involved might have been illustrated at great length from Aristotle. Finally *ἀρμονία* may be equivalent to *μέλος* in 1449. b. 29, though this is doubtful, and to *τόνος* in 1449. a. 27, but it is never our English "harmony."

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*Four Plays of Menander: The Hero, Epitrepones, Periceiromene, and Samia.* Edited with Introductions, Explanatory Notes, Critical Appendix, and Bibliography, by EDWARD CAPPS. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1910. x + 329 pp.

Mr. Capps's edition of the four plays in the Cairo papyrus has a distinct individuality: the editor's liberal employment of his own supplements in the filling of lacunae, his independence in the distribution of